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MONTANA
DISASTER AND EMERGENCY
SERVICES
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ADMINISTRATOR

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PLAIN LANGUAGE

NOTES FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Many things have been happening since the last newsletter. I only wish that we could control everything that is happening, but as usual in this business, many things happen in spite of our efforts.

The 25th Annual Governor's Conference and DES workshop was a success. Many people devoted many hours to make it all come about, especially the local DES Coordinators who facilitated the table top exercise and those who presented disaster lessons learned. As usual, we can not address everyone's suggestions all of the time, therefore I continue to be receptive to all good ideas for future Governor's Conferences. County Commissioners are such an important part of the emergency management team, therefore, I want to continue our association with MACO and the County Commissioners to improve the EM team.

Our National Security Exercise, "Transportation 92" was also a success. Our first priority was to insure that the local exercises worked correctly. Many people worked hard to plan, organize and simulate the situations that the local governments needed to make their exercise work. We have also developed plans to improve the State EOC operations -- documentation, orientations, training and exercising. It was an excellent look at ourselves and how we do business.

Members of the State DES are deeply involved in execution of State budgets. For State Fiscal Year (SFY) 92 we have reduced travel somewhat to meet directed budget cuts. The big shortfalls appear to be in SFY 93 and we are currently awaiting further guidance as to what our share of the cuts will be. At the same time we are involved in a time schedule for development of budgets for the SFY 95 biennium. The critical item in the SFY 95 biennium is to get State funding approved for the earthquake program. At the same time we have to look forward to completion of 1992 CCA work elements and development of a 1993 CCA proposal. This is a never ending opportunity for excellence.

Of course, we must always be ready for emergencies and disasters. It appears that we have missed a serious flood season because of the short snowpack in the mountains. However, our National Weather Service friends caution us against premature optimism because heavy spring rains could still cause flooding. With the summer-like weather that we have had this spring, we are going to get into our fire season very early. Hopefully, we can get normal, or above normal, spring rains in April, May and June.

Good luck -- best of everything -- keep talking to us.

-Bill Good

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** URGENT NOTICE **

Now is the time to check all of your radio licenses and make sure they have not expired.

The Federal Communications Commission recently established a finder's preference program that makes frequencies on expired radio licenses available to new users. Those agencies that have allowed their radio licenses to expire for more than one year could lose their frequency to another user.

The Associated Public Safety Officers, Incorporated, which is the frequency coordination entity for local government and police radio users, is in the process of purging all licenses that have been expired for one year or more from its data base.

If your agency is operating with an expired license, the users are in violation of federal statute and subject to penalties. Worse yet, once "your" frequency is licensed to another user, if interference exists you will have to cease all operations on that frequency. Then you will

have to find and license a new frequency and bear the costs of changing frequencies in all of your radios.

-Homer Young

DAM SAFETY NEEDS LOCAL INPUT

Recently there seems to be a great deal of interest in dam safety. It seems that way from my perspective, as I have attended two meetings on the subject during the last month.

One of the meetings was a two day conference sponsored by the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). The purpose of this conference was to bring together a wide range of government agencies who are involved in dam operation, responsibility and safety. You would not believe the number of dams in Montana. Depending on the agency you talk to, there are as many as 3500 dams in Montana of which 85 or more are considered to be **HIGH HAZARD**. Each outfit was allocated time for presentations and sharing of concerns. I gave an overview on Montana DES.

The other meeting was of the legislative Water Policy Committee. It lasted only a half of an hour, but could have far reaching consequences. One of the current missions of the committee is to study the Montana Dam Safety Act and implementing regulations. The study will determine the acceptable degree of risk to public safety and appropriate allocation of responsibility for that risk between the public, government and dam owners.

The Montana Dam Safety Act requires that owners of existing high hazard dams obtain a permit from DNRC by July 1, 1995 verifying that the dam satisfies safety standards. The cost of rehabilitating state-owned high hazard dams is expected to exceed \$200 million.

The public policy questions the committee is being asked to answer for the state are: **How much risk is acceptable?** and **Who should assume it?** There is a trade off to be made between the cost of building or rehabilitating a dam, on one hand, and the risk to public safety on the other.

(continued on page 4)

If risk to public safety is increased, for example, by changing the definition of high hazard so that **the loss of more than one life is acceptable**, or allowing a lower minimum spillway capacity, the cost of the reservoir construction and rehabilitation is decreased. The committee is being asked to decide where the balance is between cost and safety.

This and several other issues are to be answered by the committee.

A packet was sent to all DES coordinators on January 30, 1992 providing information regarding the Water Policy's Committee study for review and comment. We had only one response from the emergency management community. Again, on March 17, 1992, the committee mailed a similar packet. On April 8, 1992, Mr. Bill Good, Administrator, Montana DES sent a letter requesting comments from concerned coordinators.

The next Water Policy Committee meeting, scheduled for May 8, 1992, will include an informal public meeting on the Dam Safety Study and the Committee's

preliminary recommendations. The Committee will accept written or oral testimony on the issues either before or at the meeting. If you are so inclined, this would be an excellent opportunity for you to express your opinion.

-Larry Akers

FREEBIES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The Family Protection Program is at it again with more goodies than anyone can imagine! The latest offering is camera-ready copy of the brochure *Your Family Disaster Plan*, L-191, September 1991. Requests for this brochure have been so heavy after it was mentioned in a recent edition of Parade Magazine that copies are out of stock soon after reprinting. Emergency managers can bypass the FEMA distribution system and get some recognition for their own organization by printing their own copies of the brochure. There is a place on the proof to insert your agency logo or by-line. Here's a chance to get quality publications without the setup charge.

Camera-ready materials are available for: *Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit*, L-189, *Emergency Preparedness Checklist*, L-154 and *Emergency Food and Water Supplies*, FEMA-215. If you have questions about these camera-ready documents contact Wayne Blanchard, FEMA, 500 C Street, South West, Room 602, Washington, D. C. 20472.

Printed copies of these brochures are available from the Helena DES office, just ask!

The *Natural Hazards Observer* reviewed two books that you may want to order. The first, *Exercise Planning and Evaluation*, 1991 (revised), 186 pages, discusses developing, conducting and analyzing all types of exercises. The book uses different exercise names than those of FEMA, but all exercise areas are covered. This book also provides an understanding of exercises as a means for evaluating an emergency management system. Developed as the basis for a training course, it also provides course objectives.

(more ...Publications on page 5)

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The second book is *Emergency Preparedness: A Guide for School Emergency Preparedness* written by Patrick LaValla, Robert Stoffel and Charles Erwin, 1991, 177 pages. The book is designed to help administrators, principals and teachers develop emergency plans to meet the needs of their school district. The book contains a 12 step planning process complete with school emergency procedures and preparedness measures.

The books can be ordered from The Emergency Response Institute Bookstore, 537 Foxhall Drive, North East, Olympia, Washington 98506. Each book is \$25.00 plus 10% shipping and handling (\$3.50 minimum). Checks should be made payable to the ERI Bookstore.

Bill Thomas sent a review of this book. *Containing Crisis: A Guide to Managing School Emergencies*, National Educational Service, Bloomington, IN, 1990, 113 pp., \$19.95.

The book was written by educators, so it isn't surprising that the approach is somewhat different than most emergency managers might expect. School emergencies,

for example, include shootings and kidnappings as well as industrial releases, bus accidents and severe weather. Preparation for and recovery from both on- and off-campus incidents is emphasized. Convincing examples of the need for accurate, complete and immediately retrievable records on both students and staff are given. The book explains the need to integrate school plans with community plans and contains somewhat non-traditional but valuable samples of a school and a district plan.

The book is perhaps a bit narrow in perspective, probably due to the fact that the authors are all from the same school system (Greenwood, South Carolina) and base the book primarily on their own experiences with two dramatic incidents; a school bus accident and a shooting in a school in which two students were killed and seven students and two teachers were wounded.

Any shortcomings of the book are more than compensated for by coverage of subjects such as managing parent reactions, post-incident counseling, and use

of modern technology (computers, fax, beepers etc.) for managing incidents.

Order from: National Educational Service, 1821 W. Third Street, P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402.

UPCOMING COURSES

Decision Making & Problem Solving - June 17 - Havre

HOME STUDY UPDATE

Home study course, HS-2, *Emergency Management U.S.A.* has been revised and will be available from EMI in the near future as will be HS-7, "A Citizen's Guide to Disaster Assistance"

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The annual Training Needs Assessment workshop will be held in Helena again, the week of May 18. The district and state-wide officers of the Montana DES Coordinators Association will join members of the state staff to formulate a proposed training

program for next federal fiscal year. This will be the final year of the current four year training cycle.

The recommendation of this group will be taken to the Region Training & Exercise meeting in June. A Region-wide training program will be developed. By developing a Region-wide training program, greater opportunities to attend courses, as well as expanded course offerings will be available.

Your input to this process is needed. Please contact your District VP or District Representatives with your ideas, suggestions and comments. We want to meet as many local training needs as our resources will allow.

-Chris Christensen

EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY KITS FOR SCHOOLS

Sixty emergency kits were presented to East Helena schools by the PTA and the local LDS Church on March 4th. Melanie Heintz, the project coordinator, presented the kits to Rick Hill the school superintendent and his staff.

The kits were assembled by volunteers with cash and supplies donated by 23 local businesses. ASARCO of East Helena donated 60 first aid kits that cost \$1,250. The East Helena VFW Post contributed \$100 to support this project.

Other supplies in the emergency kits include: water, blankets, porta-pottys, flashlights, solar/hand crank radios, breakfast bars and work gloves. Plan guidance was also included in the kits.

This project began last fall when the PTA learned that the school district needed emergency kits as a part of its earthquake preparedness activities. The schools are involved in drills, planning and nonstructural mitigation efforts. The emergency kits are a big addition to the preparedness plans of East Helena schools.

There were kits for each classroom at the Eastgate, Radly and Main Street schools. The kits are designed to help students and teachers be self-sufficient for the first 72 hours after a major earthquake or other disaster.

This is a great example of what a community can do with volunteers and donations from local businesses to protect their children from the effects of a damaging earthquake.

The Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program can supply a list of the materials in each kit and information on the development of this successful project. Any other community that wants to duplicate this effort can contact me for more information.

-Bob Musselman



Several coordinators have asked for ideas about LEPCs, hazmat plans/annexes and other hazardous materials issues. As usual, while I do share ideas on an issue or problem, my main goal is to have locals help locals. While there is no in-state money available to facilitate peer exchange, there is regional money. The following article is excerpted from EPA Region 8 News and Views of Chemical Preparedness.

PEER EXCHANGE PROGRAM CONTINUES TO EXPAND

Local Emergency Planning Committee officers in Region 8 jurisdictions should consider taking advantage of ideas from their peers through the

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Title III Peer Exchange Program, sponsored by EPA and ICMA. Numerous applications have been received in some Regions. However, Region 8 requests have been minimal.

Some states have had so many requests that a "mega-peer-match" is being coordinated. Several LEPC committee members will be brought to a central location to generate new ideas and solutions to common problems.

Up to \$600 per LEPC representative is available from ICMA for individual traveling expense/per diem to meet with peers. (ICMA now has a network of 3,000 LEPC members & local government officials and a newsletter that reaches 15,000 readers.)

In addition to the individual peer exchanges, if several representatives have a common concern, we'll work with ICMA to coordinate a meeting, location, and information exchange for a "mega-peer-match." Telephone EPA, Region VIII, Bob Roy at (303) 294-7060 for further information.

-Fred Cowie

RADEF

The Radiological Defense (RADEF) section has been busy the second quarter of Federal Fiscal Year 1992 providing radiological instrument exchange, plan review and training. We have been to include Cascade, Chouteau, Judith Basin, Teton, Fergus, Petroleum, Blaine and Phillips counties and the City of Great Falls, Air National Guard and Malmstrom Air Force Base.

The Fundamentals Course for Radiological Monitors was presented in Fort Shaw, Great Falls, Lewistown, Wintennet and Shelby. We appreciate the time and effort all the County DES coordinators have spent in support of the RADEF program, thus far.

The Emergency Management Institute tells us that the Fundamentals Course for Radiological Monitors (FCRM), which is the course we offer to local jurisdictions, is being revised. The materials should be available the first quarter of FFY93. The course will include more hands-on exercises and less technical/detail information.

-Jim, Dan & Dan

EMERGENCY EDUCATION NETWORK (EENET) SCHEDULE

The following is the 1992 list of EMI satellite presentations. If you are interested in any of the presentations, please send a blank VHS tape along with your request to the State office.

MAY 6 - HOW EFFECTIVE IS YOUR FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM?

MAY 20 - WORKSHOPS IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

JUNE 10 - INTEGRATED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

JUNE 24 - CHEMICAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING STANDARDS

JULY 8 - LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC FIRE EDUCATION

JULY 29 - RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLERS TECHNOLOGY

AUGUST 19 - FEMA'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

AUGUST 26 - HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION UNIFORM SAFETY ACT

SEPTEMBER 2 - URBAN DISASTER SEARCH & RESCUE: INITIAL RESPONSE STRATEGIES

SEPTEMBER 23 - SMOKE DETECTORS: CURRENT ISSUES & FUTURE APPLICATIONS

OCTOBER 11 - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

NOVEMBER 4 - WOMEN IN THE FIRE SERVICE

NOVEMBER 18 - NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY

DECEMBER 2 - EARTHQUAKES & BUILDINGS

DECEMBER 9 - INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

If you have questions about the EENET teleconferences, please contact us at the Helena office.

-Nancy Jo Ilminen

SEARCH AND RESCUE NEWS

Wilma Puich was honored by the Search and Rescue Association in Butte/Silver Bow in a surprise ceremony at their annual banquet. She was given the award for outstanding service. Congratulations, lady!

Vikki Fenton, wants everyone to know how to access or get more information on search dogs in Montana. Vikki can be reached in care of:

Absaroka Search Dogs
2312 Pine Street
Billings, Montana 59101
406-245-7335

The 24-hour Emergency number in Montana is 1-800-235-0338.

The following article was written by Paul Spengler, current president of the Montana DES Coordinators Association and Lewis & Clark County DES coordinator.

PREZ SEZ

Kudos to DES for another excellent Governor's Conference. Lots of work goes into these sessions, and it's appreciated.

Thanks for having the confidence in me by asking me to serve as your president for the next two years. My goal is to enjoy a strong liaison with the state DES office, which happens to be the first stated purpose of the DES Association. My Helena location should make this fairly effortless, and I enjoy working with the fine DES staff.

It looks like we're getting into what could become a horrendous fire season, so meet with your commissioners, sheriff and other key players in your county to prepare for the fires ahead.

But, don't forget floods, which destroy more property each year than all other disasters. The dry weather conditions remind me of the drought meeting I attended with the Soil Conservation Service two weeks before the 200-year-level flood hit the Helena Valley on May 21, 1981. With May and June as the wettest months of the year, we're never out of the woods with flooding until the 4th of July. So dust off the old flood plan and get it ready for action.

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District VP's - please try to have quarterly or, at least, semi-annual meetings.

Association members - help your VP by contributing agenda items for a meeting. There's lots to talk about in DES - just get it down on paper and send it in to your District VP.

I'm looking forward to a positive relationship with all of you and the State DES folks for the next two years. But remember, (I know you've heard this before) IT'S YOUR ASSOCIATION, so let me know about your ideas to improve emergency management in Montana.

NEW COORDINATOR ORIENTATION

A newly developed workshop designed to familiarize new DES coordinators in their emergency management duties was conducted during January. State staff, including our District Representatives, helped conduct a very successful workshop.

EMERGENCY PLANNING COURSE

The Emergency Planning Course was held in Great Falls March 30 - April 3rd. Twenty-eight participants represented Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Colorado emergency management. The class included elected officials, DES coordinators, fire, law enforcement and public works personnel and Montana Power Company representatives.

A big thanks to Jannell Quinlan, North Dakota planner, and Darrell Dvorak, South Dakota planner, for joining our instructional staff (Chris, Fred, Dan L., Nancy Jo, Bill B. and Dan M.) in making this course a real learning experience.

-Nancy Jo Ilminen

DROUGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

House Bill 537 established the Drought Advisory Committee this past legislative session. The committee is piloted by the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and is

comprised of other state agencies, including DES. The duties and responsibilities of the committee supplement those of DES during a drought.

The committee is charged with:

Developing and implementing a state drought plan,

Reporting drought monitoring information to the public,

Coordinating impact assessments,

Identifying areas of high drought probability,

Assisting in organizing local drought advisory committees

and

Providing state staff assistance to local committees.

A Drought Advisory Subcommittee was formed to coordinate formation of the state plan and a drought-aid resource guide. The guide, which identifies various programs and the types of drought assistance available, has been completed. The state plan is over half done.

Local advisory committees will be instrumental in developing measures to lessen the effect of drought factors. Larry Laknar, Beaverhead County coordinator, acted as the Drought Task Force Chairman during their 1990 drought. Larry was responsible for coordinating the networking between agencies and solution development. County DES Coordinators will play an important role in local committees; the degree of their involvement and responsibility has not been determined.

Recently, Lieutenant Governor Dennis Rehberg chaired a Drought Advisory Committee meeting. Agencies reported on moisture levels, available monitoring information, drought indexes, in-stream flow measurement and GIS mapping. A sub-committee was formed and charged with researching the possibility of increasing the number of in-stream monitoring devices. The committee discussed coordination of all available information and public education. They also discussed the goals of the committee and the importance of local advisory committees.

The Drought Advisory Subcommittee reviewed plan progress and discussed developments and areas needing attention. It was decided the Drought Advisory Committee should meet more often during the drought season to identify possible drought areas and necessary actions.

-Dan McGowan

WHAT IS A "FRONTIER" COUNTY?

The U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Health Care and Delivery Assistance, have determined that "frontier" areas on the extreme rural end of the urban/rural or metropolitan/nonmetropolitan spectrum have distinct and definable disadvantages in delivering emergency services.

Generally, frontier counties are defined as those with large service areas, less than six persons per square mile, and long travel times to the next level of care. Montana has 45 frontier counties, with large portions of others qualifying as frontier areas.

Montana DES is preparing a document entitled *Beyond Rural: The Montana Frontier Thesis* that will be available shortly.

-Fred Cowie

FAREWELL AND ADIEU

District #2 thanks Tom Bersuch and Doug Pitt for their many years of dedicated service to DES. Tom served as District Vice President and is the immediate past President of the Montana DES Coordinators Association. His leadership, helpful ways and the big, friendly smile will be missed by all.

Doug Pitt is the immediate past vice president for District #2. Doug has also proved to have been a very valuable asset to our association organization.

We are sorry to see Tom and Doug leave our association. May God bless you both and may you both continue to enjoy life at its very best.

-Irene Gottfried

Irene Gottfried is the current Montana DES Coordinators Association Vice President for District #2.

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KEEPING YOUR PERSONNEL COMPUTER HEALTHY

Many of us are using desktop computers to handle our routine paperwork and correspondence. Some of us track office finances on the machine. A few of us will also admit to playing a game or two on the electronic wizard (just to keep our typing skills sharp!). Though we may deny it, computers are becoming a necessity in our jobs. So, how do you keep the datted thing running?

The most recent computer scare was a computer virus called Michaelangelo. A computer virus is similar to those that make us sick. It can clog the computer until it can't think straight. Or make all of the machines' insides turn to jelly. A computer virus really is a specialized computer program designed to destroy your computerized information and give you an unbelievable headache.

Protecting your computer from a virus is very simple. Don't "borrow" disks and software from other people. Do keep original program disks in a safe place. And do back-up your files often.

The first suggestion will reduce the chances your personal computer will get exposed to a virus. The second two will make it easier for you to reverse the damage if your computer does get a virus.

The National Computer Security Association, (717) 258-1816, offers free help to any personal computer user whose machine contracts a virus. They also publish the *Computer Survival Guide* a manual available for \$5.00 that includes tips for virus prevention and computer recovery. To get a copy of this handy reference write to: National Computer Security Association, 4401-A Connecticut Avenue, North West, Suite 309, Washington, D. C. 20008.

-Mary Arnold

COMINGS AND GOINGS

There's been a change in Park County Disaster and Emergency Services. Bob Fry, the District 3 fire bug, has formally stepped from his job as coordinator to the deputy coordinator role. He will be doing only three or four full-time jobs, part-time now.

Travis Chevallier is the new DES coordinator in Park County. (When all else fails Travis, you can always assign the really awful stuff back to Bob.) Welcome to DES!

A familiar face and smile we will miss is that of Tom Bersuch. After 20+ years as Fergus County DES coordinator, Tom resigned due to conflicts between his two jobs. Best wishes in all your future endeavors, Tom.

Karen (Tootie) Marks is continuing her long-term emergency management efforts as the acting Fergus County DES coordinator. The Fergus County commission is in the midst of selecting a permanent coordinator. The selection will be announced in early May.

The Montana Disaster and Emergency Services Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Disaster and Emergency Services Division. It is funded, in part, by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Contributions of articles and ideas are welcome. Deadlines for submission are January 8--February issue, April 8--May issue, July 8--August issue and October 8--November issue.

The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. The articles in this newsletter do not constitute official policy. Questions regarding articles may be addressed to the DES Newsletter Editor. -Mary Arnold

**Congratulations
Dan Lieberg**

**Department of
Military Affairs**

**Employee of the
YEAR!!!!**

You're our favorite EVERY day!